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THE BIRTH OF OUR NATION

NAWAB SALAR JUNG BAHADUR
-DEDICATED TO

THE GANDHIAN ERA



Unveiled at the
Mysore Constituent
Assembly, Mysore.

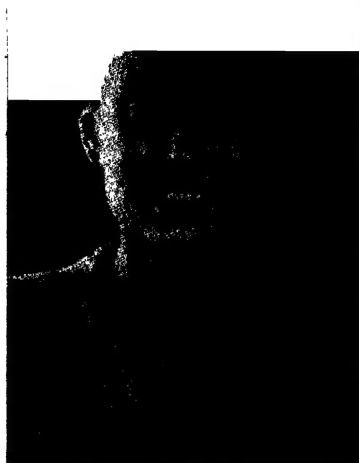
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presented by

THE CHITRA PLAYERS

FOREWORD



HIMA KESARCODI
PRODUCER & AUTHOR
OF THE REVIEW

The Story of "The Chitra Players"

The CHITRA PLAYERS have come into existence as a direct result of a gathering of artists, under the leadership of Mr. and Mrs. Kesarcodi for the production of the dance dramatisation of Tagore's CHITRA, but its origin begins years ago when the main nucleus of the group and many of the artists still working with it started work with Hima Kesarcodi. The CHITRA PLAYERS embodies the hopes and dreams of well-tried artists who know each other well and have only after a thorough knowledge of each other's capabilities and idiosyncrasies chosen to throw their lot in with

each other. If this is true of the artists it is equally true of the executive staff and the people behind stage. without whose help it would be impossible to run a group such as the CHITRA PLAYERS—a group that exists mainly on its SPIRIT. The story of a group such as this one cannot however be complete without mention of the faith, encouragement and help given to it in the worst hours of its existence...Such a man as Mr. K. M. Mody who along with the noble traditions that always go with him, stood like a stalwart pillar of strength against whom the group could always been in its hour of direst need and who with his wife, Mrs. Ellen Mody have gone out of their way to give of the loving cup of kindness—so very liberally...Dharma Prakash Srinivasayya who out of sheer generosity of spirit started the CHITRA PLAYERS off with a donation and Mrs. Kamal Pittie whose idealism has carried her into many vicissitudes and inconveniences directly because of the ardour of her support for the work of The CHITRA PLAYERS. Then again there are various small donors due to whose faith in them the players could start the “BIRTH OF OUR NATION” whose faith and support have been like so many lights shining in a rather bewildering darkness for the artists concerned. It is primarily the concern of the CHITRA PLAYERS to establish a school of Dance and Drama which will also be able to present some of the greater artists of our time who will perhaps play under their banner one day. It is also their hope to popularise dance and drama but never at the expense of the standard of production of dance or drama to establish at least a ‘week end’ theatre with the good will and appreciation of the public and always to be faithful to the highest tenets of the most arduous of vocations ‘the Arts’. For this we ask for donations not only for the upkeep of the various activities of the group but also for the building of a theatre or at least the hiring of a beautifully set out ‘little theatre’ like the Capitol or a larger place like the Excelsior. For those interested in the group activities it might be mentioned here that regular classes are being held under the auspices of the Y. W. C. A. and taught by *Krishnan Kutty*—dance director of the CHITRA PLAYERS.

“THE BIRTH OF OUR NATION”

WRITTEN AND PRODUCED	by	Hima Kesarcodi
DANCE DIRECTION	„	Krishnan Kutty
MUSIC DIRECTION	„	Shanker Singh
MUSICIANS	„	Jaikrishna
	„	Panikar (Chanda)
	„	David S. Silva
		(Saxo Phone)
	„	John DeSouza (Violin)
	„	S. N. Bannerjee (Violin)
	„	J. V. Acharya (Sitar)
	„	M. G. Shroff } Flute
	„	Jaysing }
	„	Laxmils Charrot } Tabla
	„	C. Bhosle }
	„	Kalyanji (Clarionet)
	„	Sharat Babu (Dilruba)
SONGS WRITTEN	„	Jaidev Misra
HINDI TRANSLATION	„	Jaidev Singhania
COSTUMES EXECUTED	„	N. K. Nair
„ DESIGNED	„	Mr. Joshi
SETS „	„	Rustom Banker
„ EXECUTED	„	Minerva Studios
IN CHARGE OF PRODUCTION	„	P. N. Kesarcodi
„ LIGHTS	„	V. R. Sashital
STAGE - MANAGER	„	Nogi Karanjiwalla
BUSINESS ASSISTANT	„	S. Sarvottam Rao

SINGERS	by	Vasanti Kodikal
	„	Kauslalya Mangeshwar
	„	Miss Padukone
LIGHTS LOANED	„	Hindusthan Information Films
PUBLICITY AND TITLE	„	M. D. Japheth
COMMENTARY—ENGLISH	„	Mira Chatterji
„ HINDI	„	M. L. Shah
MAKE UP ARTIST	„	G. Gadhiali
PHOTOGRAPHER	„	S. N. Nigam
DYEING OF CLOTHES	„	Mr. Padukone

Last but certainly not least—thanks must be given to the Y. M. C. A. and the Elphinstone college authorities for rehearsal halls, the management of the Capitol theatre and to the gentlemen of the press for their co-operation and help.



**Chitra (Hima) & Arjuna
(Krishan Kuttu) From our
Dance Drama Chitra
By Tagore**

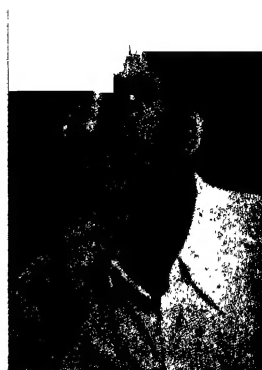




JAIDEV MISRA
TALENTED SONGWRITER

BEHIND the SCENES

IN THE PALACE OF THE



SHANKER SINGH
MUSIC DIRECTOR FOR 'CHITRA'
AND
'THE BIRTH OF OUR NATION'



P. N. KESARCODI
ORGANISER OF THE
'CHITRA PLAYERS'



**JAIDEV
SINGHANIA**
HINDI TRANSLATOR
OF THE GROUP

**S. SARVOTTAM
RAO**
BUSINESS
ASSISTANT

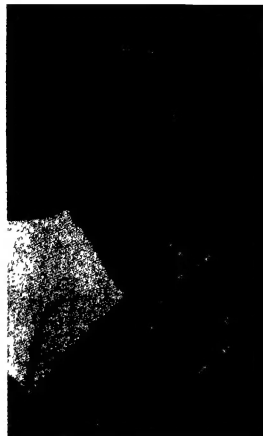




**HIMA KESARCODI AND KAMAL
IN NATANAM ADINAR**



VASANTI CODICAL
SINGER



MISS CHATTERJEE
SINGER



MANJESHWAR - MISS PADUKONE (SINGERS)



M. L. SHAH

HINDI COMMENTATOR



ANUSUYA AS SUPERSTITION



INDIRA - KUSUM - TEHMY

V. KUMAR - SANJIVA - NAMBOODRI - NAIR - SINGH
 PARTITION - VIOLENCE - DEATH - ORTHODOXY - DEVIL



Something about the Artists

Out of the Chaos created by the death of Gandhiji on the opening night of 'Chitra' at the Excelsior emerged "THE CHITRA PLAYERS" a group of artists and technicians under the guidance of Mr. & Mrs. P. N. Kesarcodi. Mrs. Kesarcodi has been connected with the theatre and Radio in Bombay since 1939—Apart from hailing from a family famous for their artistic achievements, She has herself been brought up in the strictest schools of theatrical tradition—Dancing—both Indian and ballet were taught to her from the age of three, but her love and attachment for theatre really proved itself in England when during the course of ten years in order to continue her dramatic training as an external student of the Royal Academy—she had to go through many deprivations. Her crowning glory as a true follower of the traditions of Great Art came—when offered the part next to Raymond Massey in the "Drum" she refused the false glitter of easy rise in the film industry for the completion of her studies in Theatre. For to Hima the traditional Theatre in its full sense—a combination of dance and drama—has always been a special attachment and closest to her heart. Back in India she could only find real scope for her talent after she married P. N. Kesarcodi now organiser of the "CHITRA PLAYERS". Coming also from a family known for its cultural achievements, Kesarcodi, was thoroughly seeped in the traditional art of our country from his childhood. Hima could have found no better man to encourage and help her through the trials of working towards the establishment of the theatre in Bombay.

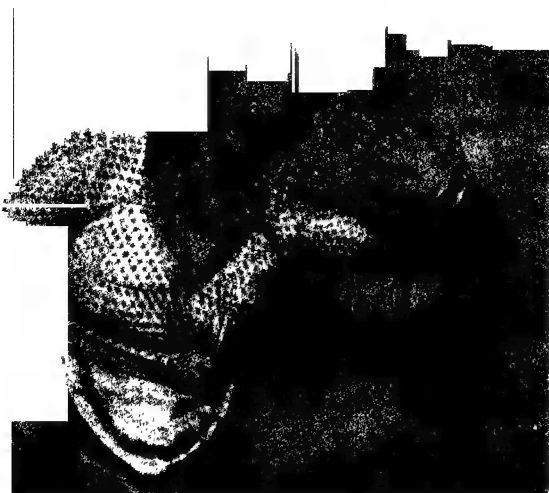
"The Birth of our Nation" dance review was written by Hima Kesarcodi as a direct inspiration from the 30th January 1948—when the fourth act was actually written and the rest evolved itself during those dark days—immediately after the death of Gandhiji, that fell like a pall upon the whole of India. The production is conceived on a massive scale—Artists numbering nearly fifty—the movements are so to speak in three words—1) Hindustan, 2) the powers of Good and 3) the powers of Evil. The review aims at bringing home the spiritual message of the Mahatma—more than

presenting cold historical fact. For this purpose his message to the world at large and India especially has been symbolised in an abstract character "The Light of Gandhiji" portrayed by Krishnan Kutty" dance director and star of the 'Birth of our Nation'. It is perhaps because Krishnan Kutty—star pupil of the great old Kathakali master "Shankaran Namboodri"—has also been brought up in the strictest school of traditional art, that he combines so well in "The Chitra Players" whose badge is "Work, work, and more work" It is because of his indefatigable energy and the right attitude of mind towards every form of dance that Krishnan Kutty has been able to master Bharat Natyam—Manipuri—and Kathak—while folk—especially of the South has been, of course, part of his early training. This knowledge together with a mental alertness that makes him always ready to explore new fields has made him able to direct the choreography of a comparatively new thing in India—"Dance-Drama"—with outstanding success. Perhaps his work is made easier as he works with Prabhakar and Hima who though believing in adaptations for purposes of stage production never deviate from their fidelity to the preservation of the purity of the dance forms.

Because of the period in the Nation's struggle that "The Birth of our Nation" deals with the dance review is of course studded with songs—some bringing up nostalgic memories of the proudest period in our modern history—others new but full of the same fire—created by Misra a song writer who has given off his very best—freely and with the true zeal of an artist—when you see this show you will remember Jaideo Misra. Music is, of course, with Shankarsingh son of the Soil particularly talented for creating that kind of music—Peasants for the people. The commentary spoken in English by Mira Devi, Hima's talented and famous mother has been translated into Hindi by Jaidev Singhania and will be spoken by Shah from the United Provinces.

Among the starlets are Kamal and Anusuya, both hailing from Indore—with a back ground of six years training at 'Nrityalam"—Madame Menaka's school at Khandala under the supervision of the best teachers—who joined the "Chitra Players" after Menaka's death.

Kamal, particularly talented in Kathak is here appearing as **IGNORANCE**—a Kathak sequence—while Anusuya a talented Manipuri folk dancer appears as **SUPERSTITION**. Both are stalwart pillars of the “Chitra Players” and take their full share in the division of all the work of this group. Pramilla and Aruna—the glamorous and gay sisters who have recently together with Krishnan Kutty been gathering fresh Kudos for themselves and the “Chitra Players” in a dance sequence of “Pyar-ki-Jeet”; Shakuntala and Mukta both dancers for a considerable time coming down to us from our production of “Chitra”; Shakuntala is a pupil of Krishnan Kutty for many years and is still at school. Mukta attends college and is studying French. Among the men come “Sanjeeva”—talented folk dancer hailing from Mangalore—studying painting at the J. J. School of art—playing Violence. Namboodri—straight from the southern school Kerala Kala Mandalam conspicuous for his facial expression—playing Yama, god of death. Vasant Kumar—office worker pegging away as a filing clerk comes to life in the show as a lightning Kathak dancer, playing ‘Partition’; Nair—specialised in Krishna *atum*—light, agile and acrobatic, hailing from the South plays Violence. Singh—a Manipuri dancer from Bengal is now an office worker during the day. Mr. Japheth publicity officer for the English Press—must here be given credit for encouragement and the suggestion of the title of the review. Mention must here also be made of the selfless service accorded to the group by Mr. V. R. Sashital—in-charge of lights—and by S. Sarvottam Rao—business assistant and of Mr. Nogi Karanjawalla—Stage Master—as also of Mr. Champaklal Mody who has always been most helpful with his advice and Mr. Gurjar who gave us the cover page of this programme—And now a word must be said about the rest of the cast numbering over 30—recently joined the “Chitra Players” each one of whom deserve a pat on the back for the spirit with which they work—falling in line with the greatest demands made upon them. It is on this spirit that the “Chitra Players” mainly exist with the added hope that most of them will be able to become full time artists—with the good will and appreciation of the public—and so give off their very **BEST**!



HIMA KESARCODI—in a pose from
Natanam Adinar (cosmic dance of Shiva)
 a Bharat Natyam sequence

WEeping MoThERS
KAMAL • HIMA • ANUSUYA



NAWAB SALA

Scenes
th
Ba!



Krishnan K
"LIGHT OF

JUNG BAHADUR

from
e
et



ty as the
GANDHI"



Kamal in a Kathak sequence "IGNORANCE"

FACTORY WORKERS



“The Birth of Our Nation”

Ladies and Gentlemen :

So that there should be no misunderstanding, I wish to explain that I have symbolised the spirit of Gandhiji's work in the character that plays “The Light of Gandhiji”. This is a technique followed in modern Western Ballet to show the mental process of a certain character and must not in this particular case be confused with the actual personality of so great a man as Gandhiji himself.

SYNOPSIS

Act—I

The first act presents a tableau of India in the early twenties torn between her two sons RICHES & POVERTY. In comparison to the present Era a small sample of the song-music and dance of olden times is shown — the Peasants forming the link between the past and the present. Adding to the confusion in the country comes MODERNITY bringing in her train a new breed—THE FACTORY WORKERS. The old and the new naturally clash and out of this clash is born the “LIGHT OF GANDHIJI”, who determines to free his motherland from the plight in which he has found her. The scene ends with a symbolic breaking of the chains held across India mother.

CAST

Tableau	(INDIA	....	<i>Ayesha</i>
	Rajah	....	<i>K N. Nair</i>
	Peasant	... ..	<i>S. Sarvottam Rao</i>
Cultures of old	Song	... ..	<i>S. Singh</i>
	Music	... ..	<i>Acharya</i>
	Natanam Adinar	} Hima &	<i>Kamal</i>
	Cosmic dance of Shiva		

PEASANTS

Wood-cutter	...	<i>Sanjiva</i>
Vessel-Girl	...	<i>Premilla</i>
Cowherd	...	<i>Golikeri</i>
and wife	...	<i>Mukta</i>
Dhobiwomen	...	<i>Tehmy, Indira</i>
Temptress	...	<i>Aruna</i>
Water girls	...	<i>Chandri, Shakuntala,</i> <i>Kusum</i>
Village (Beau)	...	<i>Dattaram</i>
His friend	...	<i>Ramesh</i>
Villagers	...	<i>Vasant Kumar, Singh</i> <i>Wishwanath</i>
Zamindar	...	<i>Namboodrie</i>

MODERNITY

... *Hima*

FACTORY WORKERS

... *Soshan, Edna, Daulat,*
Nair, Zahira, Zohra,
Jane, Indru, Suresh,
Zeenat, Roy, Bandekar

LIGHT OF GANDHIJI

... *Krishnan Kutty*

Act—II

Presents the masses under the sway of FEAR, SUPERSTITION AND IGNORANCE whom the LIGHT OF GANDHIJI drives away calling to the Desh Sevikas and Harijans to fight for their national consciousness with his weapons—the Charka, the Thackli and PRAYER—LOVE is reborn in the hearts of the people and the curtain goes down on the rising of the DAWN of enlightenment.

C A S T

Masses	...	<i>Members of the company</i>
FEAR	...	<i>Hima</i>
Superstition	...	<i>Ansuya</i>
IGNORANCE	...	<i>Kamal</i>
DESH SEVIKAS	....	<i>Premilla, Mukta, Aruna, Shakuntala, Indira</i>
HARIJANS	....	<i>Vasantkumar. Singh, Bande kar, Sanjiva</i>
LOVE	...	<i>Lasika Kesarcodi</i>
DAWN Usha)	....	<i>Premilla</i>

Act—III

Facets of the struggle for Independence (1) Dandi March (2) No Tax campaign (3) Mass tree cutting on the Independence day—rejoicings—the flower girls—the Christian Hindu and Muslim comic episode—PARTITION and the weeping of the LIGHT OF GANDHIJI.

C A S T

Masses	....	<i>Members of the company</i>
WAVE DANCE	...	<i>Premilla, Aruna, Anusuya, Mukta, Hima Kamal</i>
MONKEY MAN	...	<i>Golikeri</i>
Male Monkey	...	<i>Singh</i>
Female Monkey	...	<i>Anusuya</i>
VIOLENCE	....	<i>Namboodri Nair</i>
FLOWER GIRLS	....	<i>Kamal, Shakuntala, Premilla, Hima, Anusuya, Aruna</i>
Christian girl	....	<i>Hima</i>
Muslim	...	<i>Roy</i>
Hindu	....	<i>Bandekar</i>
Friend	....	<i>Vasantkumar</i>
Christain Boy	...	<i>Delima</i>

Act—IV
SALAR JUNG BAHADUR

The FORCES OF EVIL gather strength—Devil—Death—Orthodoxy, Partion and Violence—dance in fearful glee and will not allow the “LIGHT OF GANDHIJI” to reach the bewildered masses—The weeping of women and children is heard throughout the land and the forces of evil temporarily quench the LIGHT but the people rise in one block against them and destroy them—the curtain goes down on the re-awakening of the LIGHT among the people.

C A S T

Light of Gandhiji	}	....	<i>Krishnan Kuttu</i>
Devil			
Death		...	<i>Namboodri</i>
Orthodoxy		....	<i>M. Singh</i>
Partition		....	<i>Vasantkumar</i>
Violence		...	<i>Sanjiva, Nair</i>
Weeping women		..	<i>Hima, Kamal, Anusuya</i>

EPILOGUE

A cross section of the streets in Bombay and the reaction of the people to the news of the Mahatma's death with a little something thrown in on the side of hope for the future.



PREMILLA
AS
USHA



LASIKA
AS
MADAN





INDEPENDANCE



M. D. JAPHETH

SUGGESTED THE TITLE AND HANDLED
ENGLISH PUBLICITY. AUTHOR AND
DEVOTEE OF THE GANDHIAN WAY.

PEASANTS



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